

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4805
INFO USDOC WASHDC
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MANAMA

UNCLAS KUWAIT 1010

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, KU

SUBJ: PROPOSED SOCIETY OF PLASTICS INDUSTRY IOGA TRADE MISSION

REF: STATE 25115

1. EMBASSY FEELS THAT, ON THE WHOLE, SUBJECT MISSION SHOULD BE WELL RECEIVED IN KUWAIT. BUILDING BOOM IN HOUSING AND OTHER AREAS LIKELY TO PROVIDE NUMEROUS OPPORTUNITIES FOR U.S. FIRMS IN THE FIELDS OF BUILDING PRODUCTS, HOUSEWARES, PLASTIC PIPE, ETC. WITHOUT MORE INFORMATION ON FIRMS OR THEIR PRODUCTS, EMBASSY CANNOT COMMENT FURTHER, BUT NOTES THAT INTEREST OF KUWAITI BUSINESSMEN WOULD LIE IN TWO AREAS; A) DIRECT SALES OF FINISHED PRODUCTS (CONTRACTORS AWARE OF BOOM AND ARE ANXIOUS TO GEAR UP FOR IT BY ESTABLISHING RELATIONSHIPS WITH U.S. FIRMS ON SUPPLY OF VARIOUS MATERIALS); AND B) JOINT VENTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR FABRICATION OF DIFFERENT PLASTIC PRODUCTS. (KUWAITI BUSINESSMEN, WITH THE HELP OF THE INDUSTRIAL BANK OF KUWAIT, HAVE BEEN SETTING UP ESTABLISHMENTS FOR THE MANUFACTURE OF VARIOUS BUILDING MATERIALS, AND WOULD ACTIVELY SEEK FOREIGN UNCLASSIFIED

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PARTNERS FOR TECHNICAL ADVICE AND TRAINING).

2. EMBASSY UNCERTAIN, HOWEVER, ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR PREFABRICATED HOUSING (REFTEL, PARA 2). SEVERAL PREFAB FIRMS FROM U.S. HAVE VISITED KUWAIT TO DISCOVER THAT, INsofar AS HOUSING IS CONCERNED, BOTH GOK AND PRIVATE KUWAITIS PREFER MORE CONVENTIONAL CONCRETE SYSTEMS. TO THE EXTENT THAT THERE IS INTEREST (MAINLY ON THE GOVERNMENT SIDE) IN PREFAB METHODS FOR HOUSING, GOK HAS ALREADY SELECTED SYSTEMS THEY WILL BE USING ON NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY PROGRAMS. EMBASSY ALSO WANTS TO POINT OUT THAT SEVERAL COMPANIES DEALING IN PREFAB STRUCTURES (FOR COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES) ALREADY ARE OPERATING IN KUWAIT, SOME WITH AMERICAN PARTNERS, AND WOULD CONSTITUTE SEVERE COMPETITION FOR NEW U.S. FIRMS. IF REFTel REFERRING TO EQUIPMENT OR MATERIALS THAT WOULD BE USED IN PREFAB CONSTRUCTION, OF COURSE, GROWTH OF THESE LOCAL COMPANIES WOULD PROVIDE EXCELLENT PROSPECTS FOR U.S. FIRMS.

3. PROPOSED OCTOBER TIMING SHOULD PRESENT NO PROBLEMS. RAMADHAN ENDS SEPT 27, SO LOCAL BUSINESS SEASON WILL BE JUST GETTING UNDERWAY AFTER SUMMER LULL. EMBASSY SHOULD BE ABLE TO SUPPORT TRADE MISSION IN OCTOBER. BECAUSE OF AMERICAN EXPO-76 TRADE SHOW IN KUWAIT, HOWEVER (NOW SCHEDULED FOR MID-NOVEMBER), EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT TRADE MISSION BE SCHEDULED FOR MID-OCTOBER.

4. MISSION SHOULD SPEND AT LEAST THREE WORKING DAYS IN KUWAIT. SOME TIME SHOULD BE ALLOWED FOR FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS. GIVEN RAMADHAN, ADVANCE MEN FOR MISSION, DEPENDING ON WHAT THEY WANT TO DO HERE, SHOULD CONSIDER VISITING IN MID-AUGUST AT THE LATEST. ORGANIZERS SHOULD ALSO KEEP IN MIND THAT IN KUWAIT, FRIDAY IS A HOLIDAY WITH NO APPOINTMENTS POSSIBLE, WHILE ON THURSDAYS APPOINTMENTS CAN BE MADE ONLY IN MORNING.
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